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AN ANALYSIS OF THE LOCATION OF WORSHIP CENTERS ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY VALUES IN OTA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Location of property is an effective tool in complementary land uses. Man in his quest for relationship with a Supreme Being resulted in the allocation of land to meet such need. However, the location of the Living Faith Church, Ota, the largest single worship center in the world, accommodating about 50, 000 worshippers, around other zoned land uses, residential inclusive, is a point of concern. This work aimed at discovering the effect of the worship center on property values in the study area. Forty-five local estate agents with the two estate surveying firms practicing in the area were surveyed. Data were analyzed using the Student-T test at a confidence level of 95%. Findings reveal that the location of religious centers had a significant impact on the residential rental values. The researchers opine that worship centers be situated close to residential properties so as to enhanced economic development. However, a call for an effective traffic control scheme is advocated.

Keywords: Location; Religion; Worship Centers; Residential Properties; Property Values

INTRODUCTION

Religion, as a phenomenon of human concern, is perhaps the most complex, most involving, and yet the least comprehensible of all the disciplines within the humanities. Right from the dawn of human creation or evolution to the present age, man has been the only universally established and acknowledged being that has something to do with religion in terms of beliefs and practices. In other words man is the only religiously conscious being. Even when the existence of the Supreme Being cannot be substantiated by some people, the benefits of religion cannot be over emphasized. For instance, religion provides a ‘unified system of beliefs and practices’ (Hargrove, 1989), which determines society’s morality. More than being what relates the individual to a ‘higher being’, religion is also the provider of set values that influence the way each individual relates to others and his or her behavior, in general (Blanco-Mancilla, 2003). Regular attendance at religious services is linked to healthy, stable family life, strong marriages, and well-behaved children (Fagan, 2006). The practice of religion could also lead to a reduction in the incidence of domestic abuse, crime, substance abuse, and addiction. In addition, religious practice leads to an increase in physical and mental health, longevity, and education attainment. Little wonder if generations pass these benefits to future coming ones by teaching the younger ones the ethos of their religion. Hence, religion is said to provide man with an identity (Tinaz, 2000).

The aforementioned has resulted to various nations establishing ways of communicating to a Supreme Being. Nigeria, for instance, can be seen as a nation that practices three major kinds of religion, Christianity, Islam, and the Traditional worship. Several other religions in Nigeria coexist, helping to accentuate regional and ethnic distinctions. All religions represented in Nigeria are being practiced all over the nation, but Islam is believed to be dominated in the north and held strong numbers in the southwestern, Yoruba part of the country. Protestantism and local syncretism Christianity are also evidence in Yoruba areas, while Catholicism predominates in the Igbo and closely related areas. Both Protestantism and Catholicism is also believed to be dominated amongst the Ibibios, Annang, and the Efik lands. In a nutshell, figures from the (1963 census) indicated that 47 percent of Nigerians were Muslim, 35 percent Christian, and 18 percent members of local indigenous congregations. If accurate, this indicated a sharp increase in the number of Christians (up 13 percent); a slight decline among those professing indigenous beliefs, compared to 20 percent in 1953; and only a modest (4 percent) rise of Muslims. A religious survey, conducted in the country in 2009, puts the figure as follows: 50.4%, 48.2% and 1.4% for Muslims, Christians, and Others, respectively (“Religions in Nigeria”, 2010). Although, the proportion of Muslims is highest, the rise in the number of Christians over the years is evident.

In order to match the astronomical rise amongst the Christian folks, there is evident proliferation of churches within the residential vicinity (Bouma & Hughes, 2000). Recent observations has revealed that churches have been making waves all over the continent today and, as a matter of fact, brought about unknown places to be well known in the community in which bare lands have been turned into worship centers in the residential area. This could affect the people residing close to the area, due to the disturbance of noise, overcrowding, and its resultant socio-cultural effect. For urban planners, the place of worship development has been an important area of adjustment and has also been an area of considerable land use conflict (Hoernig, 2006). This situation is not farfetched in Ota as there are envisaged congestion of traffic after service days and other special events, such as Shiloh and the various youth programs in Living Faith Church, Ota. This is perhaps a major concern to motorist, worshipers, and dwellers within and around the vicinity.

Specifically, religious institutions generate a traffic volume that is comparable to those generated by residential uses on weekdays. However, on weekends, which are typically days of worship, the amount of traffic generated can be three (3) to five (5) times greater than its residential counterpart (Pinellas Planning Council, 1999). The issue of traffic hold up could lead to traffic robbery attack, noise pollution, and a health hazard from exhaust fumes within the vicinity. In other not to be delayed in meeting other appointments, worshipers could tend to leave services before closing time, resulting in adverse spiritual build up.

These are issues that have probably warranted zoning of complementary land uses. Young (2004) acclaimed that knowing more precisely how zoning affects the housing value would allow policymakers to improve long term policy decisions. Although zoning is seen in planning of residential properties, such as the government Reservation Areas, Commercial, Industrial and certain special purpose properties, such as the parks and resort centers; however, the zoning of religious worship centre is not explicit

The need for estimating the impact on property values as a result of situating religious centers in the residential vicinity forms the crux of this study. Previous research has found that the value of residential properties depend on a number of characteristics because housing is a heterogeneous commodity. Kauko (2003) listed a set of attributes that has been commonly used in property valuation research, including accessibility factors, neighborhood level factors, specific negative externalities, public services, taxes, and density factors. McCluskey, W.J., Deddis, W.G., Lamont, I.G., & Borst, R.A. (2000) measured the effect of location on residential house prices using the Ordnance survey of Northern Ireland data. The attributes they considered in their multiple regression model, calibrated by location adjustment factors, is sale price, date of sale, age of property, size, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, number of garages, type of central heating, condition, neighborhood, and group cluster. The finding was that location and structural characteristics are the key determinants of residential property values. Olujimi and Bello (2009) discovered that the provision of wall-fence round the building and the installation of burglary proof in all the windows are the most important facility in determining values of residential property. Tse and Love (2000) identified four categories of attributes, namely: structural, physical, neighborhood, and environmental, to measure residential property values using a hedonic equation in Hong Kong. Their findings showed that estate-type dwelling units are valued by the homebuyers as attributes, reflecting the preferred quality of a living environment. In addition, the availability of car parks has a strong effect, and a view of a cemetery has a negative influence on property value. Urban parks were discovered to have a strong negative relationship between the property values and the distance to the park, while a glimpse at the national parks generates an increase of 7% in property value. However, being in close walking distance to a national park has little impact upon the value of properties in the neighborhood (Pearson, L.J., Tisdell, C., & Lisle, A.T. (2002). Similarly, Chau, K. W., Wong, S.K., & Yiu, C.Y. (2004) studied the effect of balconies on the residential properties value in Hong Kong and found a positive effect on the value of a property, irrespective of the quality of the view. Other positive determinants of property values include, proximity to rail and park (Jensen & Durham, 2003); location of dams (Provencher, B., Sarakinos, H., & Meyer, T. (2006); distance from foreclosed properties (Lee, 2008); and local historic designation (Ijla, 2008). Other factors have varied effects on residential property values. These include the proximity to open space (Anderson & West, 2005); the situation of a new sport venue (Dehring, C.A., Depken, C.A., & Ward, M.R. (2007); and the closeness to highrise office buildings (Thibodeau, 1990).

In order to determine the effect of the religious centers on property values, the largest individual worship center, the Living Faith Church, Ota (Guinness Book of Records, 2008), is the focus of this work. To achieve this, certain questions that agitated the mind of the researchers are to the intent of determining the residential property values in Ota before and after the situation of the Living Faith Church, Ota and eventually discovering the impact of the Church, if any, on these property values.

METHODOLOGY

The subjects of this work are the local estate agents and the practicing estate surveying firms in the study area. Records from the secretariat of the local estate agents revealed that there are sixty (60) registered estate agents, while pre-research investigations revealed that only two estate surveying firms are located in the study area, Jide Taiwo and Co. and Olukayode Akindayini and Co.

Two questionnaires were distributed to the Estate Surveyors Firms located in Sango-Ota. This is in line with Nwana (1981) agitation for the sample of the entire population of less than 30. However, a total of 45 (forty-five) questionnaires representing 75percent of the entire Estate Agents in Ota were distributed using the random sampling approach.

The author posits that there is a significant difference in residential rental values before and after the situation of the Living Faith Church, in Ota. Thus, the researcher substantiated with the use of the Student-T test of significance at a confidence level of 95%.

THE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FIELD DATA

Forty-five questionnaires, representing the sample size, were distributed to the local agents and the two estate surveying firms in the study area. The two estate surveying firms in the study are responded by filling the questionnaires sent to them. However, thirty-five of the local estate agents representing 77.8% of the respondents filled the questionnaires distributed to them.

Response from the field indicates that there are more men (85.7%) in the estate agency business in the study area when compared to their female counterpart (14.3%). Perhaps this substantial difference is particular in all areas, as an estate agency happens to be a tasking business. Hence, men are more poise in handling such task.

Most of the estate agents are within the age bracket of 31-35 years (42.8%). Majority of the respondents (71.4%) have a maximum of Higher National Diploma (HND) as their academic qualification, and have been in practice for between 6-10 years (57.1%). Thus, immediately after acquiring some basic education, estate agents begin to practice. Perhaps, the idea of getting an advance degree and professional qualifications could be abhorred; probably due to the cognition that the estate agency is based solely on numerically skills.

Within the space of ten years, 65.71% of the local agents firms have been in existence. However, since the job happens to be conventional, much experience might not be necessary. However, the workforce of the estate agency, as expected, is not as huge as what is obtainable in most big estate surveying firms. As evident from response, 28.57% of the respondents did not bother to answer the question relating to their years of experience perhaps due to the fact that they operate a sole proprietorship venture and tend to be operational only when there are real estate agency jobs to carry out on behalf of clients'.

However, due to the vast level of experience from respondents, the researcher is of the opinion that details received from the local agents are genuine enough in analyzing the retrieved data.

The estate surveying firm Jide Taiwo and Co. was established in 1981 and has a total workforce of fifteen, as compared to Olukayode Akindayini and Co. established in 2006 with a workforce of four. Respondents that filled the questionnaire are

within the age bracket of 31-35 years and 46-50 years, having work experience in estate agency of within 5 years and between 16-20 years in Jide Taiwo and Co. and Olukayode Akindayini and Co., respectively.

Unlike their counterparts in local estate agency, personnel's in registered estate surveying firms have urged for more academic and professional pursuit. The female respondent in Jide Taiwo and Co. has a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degree in Estate Management, while on process for her professional qualification with the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers, whereas the male respondent in Olukayode Akindayini and Co. has an HND and is already qualified as an Associate of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (ANIVS). Thus, to the registered Estate Surveying firm, professionalism is a function of enhanced knowledge. However, the property market is a local market and has been in practice for sometime; the researcher is convinced that any information gotten from both the local estate agencies and the registered estate surveying firms will be genuine.

Selected Residential Annual Rental Values in Ota (1994-2010)

In order to refute or accept the posit on the effect of worship centers on residential property values, the rental values of 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, and 3 bedroom flats in the study area between 1994 and 2009 were studied. The researcher confined the work to these selected apartments as previous research indicates that these are the most sought properties in the study area (Iroham, 2005). It can be evident above that not all firms were established in the same year; therefore, the figures on rental values were not filled for certain years by some firms. For instance, in 1994, only eight (8) of the local estate firms surveyed were in existence, while ranges of values given for the property types were functions of amenities provided. It is evident from Table 1 that certain rental values, particularly for earlier years, could not be ascertained from certain local estate agents. This could be adduced in the sense that certain firms were not established as of then.

Further to enquiry on rental values, the researcher also surveyed the two estate surveying firms practicing in the study area. This will invariably allow for checks and balances and to substantiate data received from the local agents. A critical look at the response of the estate surveying firms' reveals that values of the residential properties given is similar to that of local estate agents buttressing the fact that the property market is a local market. The response of Olukayode Akindayini & Co started from year 2006, which came in existence in the study area. Table 1 below gives a vivid highlight of the mean rental values received from the field, capturing all the class of the properties and divided into post 1999 and prior 1999, when the Living Faith Church was situated in the study area.

Table 1: Selected Residential Annual Rental Values in Ota On/Before and After 1999

Rental values on/before 1999 (N'000) (X₁)	(X₁²)	Rental values after 1999(N'000) (X₂)	(X₂²)
7.9778	63.6453	15.5962	243.241
13.8929	193.013	22.550	508.503
17.2813	298.643	28.2321	797.051
7.9250	62.8056	16.1667	261.362
14.2778	203.856	26.125	682.516
17.722	314.070	32.9167	1,083.51
8.17790	66.8780	23.4118	548.112
14.8182	219.580	35.7738	1,279.80
17.900	320.41	46.6111	2,172.60
9.7188	94.4551	22.4211	502.706

16.3182	266.293	35.3636	1,250.60
20.1667	406.696	47.6471	2,270.25
10.425	108.681	39.2727	1,542.34
17.1667	294.696	45.8123	2,098.77
20.250	410.063	61.0870	3,731.62
12.5833	158.340	37.270	1,389.05
17.4808	305.578	53.9518	2,910.80
20.500	420.25	68.0370	4,629.03
8.000	64	37.9310	1,438.80
14.000	196	54.4032	2,959.71
18.500	342.25	74.7742	5,591.20
8.000	64	55.4667	3,076.60
14.500	210.25	80.000	6,400
18.000	324	100.625	10,125.4
8.500	72.25	69.9849	4,897.89
15.000	225	95.4714	9,114.79
19.500	380.25	160.857	25,875
10.500	110.25	70.4571	4,964.20
16.500	272.25	107.071	11,464.2
20.500	420.25	163.786	26,825.9
11.000	121	16.000	256
16.500	272.25	22.500	506.25
21.000	441	31.000	961
12.000	144	16.000	256
17.000	289	26.000	676
22.000	484	35.000	1,225
		23.000	529
		34.500	1,190.25
		47.500	2,256.25
		23.000	529
		36.000	1,296
		47.500	2,256.25
		37.500	1,406.25
		50.000	2,500
		60.000	3,600
		38.500	1,482.25
		47.500	2,256.25
		70.000	4,900
		36.750	1,350.56
		53.250	2,835.60
		71.250	5,076.60
		51.750	2,678.10
		71.250	5,076.60
		92.500	8,556.25
		67.500	4,556.25
		92.500	8,556.25
		150.000	22,500
		70.500	4,970.25
		103.750	10,764.10
		180.000	32,400
Total 533.5824	8,639.953	3,510.0402	7,005,780.12

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2010

Effect of the Living Faith Church Ota on Residential Property Values

History reveals that the Living Faith church was inaugurated in September 1999. Before, the establishment of the Church in Ota, history has it that the town, Ota, although regarded as the fourth largest in Ogun State, Nigeria, has had her share of derogatory mythology as “a land of witches” and as such, the town was dreaded (Iroham, 2005).

In order to determine the effect of the Church on the property values in Ota, it is pertinent to classify the rental values into two groups. First, the values of residential properties in Ota before the situation of the Church and residential property values after the situation of the church. Thus, the mean values that were received, as revealed in table 1, are classified into (a) 1999 and (b) after 1999. Thereafter, the use of the T-test of significance was adopted.

$$\text{Mean } (M_1) = \frac{535.5824}{36} = 14.8773$$

$$\text{Mean } (M_2) = \frac{3,510.0402}{60} = 58.5007$$

Using the formula below the variance of the individual group is derived as follows:

$$\text{Variance for value pro to 1999} = \frac{\sum X_1^2 - nM_1^2}{n-1}$$

$$\begin{aligned} S_1^2 &= \frac{8,639.953 - 36(14.8773^2)}{35} \\ &= \frac{8,639.953 - 7,968.02}{35} \\ &= 19.198 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Variance for value after 1999} = \frac{\sum X_2^2 - nM_2^2}{n-1}$$

$$\begin{aligned} S_2^2 &= \frac{7,005,780.12 - 60(58.5007^2)}{59} \\ &= \frac{7,005,780.12 - 205,339.914}{59} \\ &= 115,261.70 \end{aligned}$$

$$t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

Substituting the formula for figures

$$\begin{aligned}
 t &= \frac{14.8773 - 58.5007}{\sqrt{\frac{19.198}{36} + \frac{115261.70}{60}}} \\
 &= \frac{-43.6234}{\sqrt{0.5333 + 1.921}} \\
 &= \frac{-43.6234}{\sqrt{2.4543}} \\
 &= \frac{-43.6234}{1.567} \\
 &= (27.839)
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Degree of freedom} &= \frac{(n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1)}{2} \\
 &= \frac{35 + 59}{2} \\
 &= 47
 \end{aligned}$$

A degree of freedom at 95% confidence level results to a tabulated T value of 2.01. Since the calculated T-value (27.839) is more than the tabulated T-value (2.01), the null hypothesis is thereby rejected. Hence, the situation of the Living Faith Church has brought about a tremendous increase in residential property values.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

No doubt the location of religious worship centers has a remarkable impact on the increase in residential property values, which will invariably result to the consequent multiplier effect on job creation, infrastructural development, and other economic and socio-political development. In order to sustain this growth in the economy, the government is to encourage the planning of these religious centers in the vicinity of residential areas, particularly in remote areas and sub-urban areas of the country as it will not only enhance spiritual growth, but also create avenues for socio-economic development extending from these areas with large unutilized land mass.

Therefore, in order to maximize the benefits of the increase in residential property values on the stance of investors, the government should engage in the services of highway engineers', regional planners', estate surveyors, and valuers, amongst other professionals, particularly in the environmental sciences so as to curb the issue of traffic congestion, which could lead to lateness to work or pressing engagement. This can be done by an acquisition of land in such areas for expansion of road networks, while adequate compensation is paid to the affected citizens.

This study has looked at the effect of the location of religious centers on property values, discovering a huge impact on the latter. Thus, religious centers should be seen not merely as a center for spiritual edification, but also as an avenue for

enhancing the living standards of the populace. Thus, religion is an avenue of making the total man, viz-a-viz the building of spiritual, mental, social, and economic stability of not just a man, but an entire nation.

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